

BOZART and Contemporary Verse

Combining JAPM and The Oracle

Founded by ERNEST HARTSOCK



MAY-JUNE, 1932

OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY, GEORGIA

BOZART and Contemporary Verse

Combining Latin and The Greeks
by RICHARD BARTON



NEW YORK

DEWEY'S UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Founded by ERNEST HARTSOCK

THORNWELL JACOBS, JAMES E. ROUTH and ROBERT LESEUR JONES, *Editors*

Associate Editors—NATHAN HASKELL DOLE and BENJAMIN MUSSER

Published Six Times a Year by OGLETHORPE UNIVERSITY PRESS,
Oglethorpe University, Georgia.

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EVENING IN A STUDIO

The place has changed since she came in
 Like a bird to escape the stormy night.
 She is so delicate and slight
 She rouses all my masculine

Protectiveness. Sadly she moves
 About my room, pretending pleasure
 As I display each print and treasure;
 Fully aware I know she loves

My pupil with his haunting face
 Who spoke so casually of her.
 It's woman's nature to prefer
 The counterfeit to true, the base

To honest. Soon we speak of him.
 I win a searching look when I
 Relate affairs of mine; deny
 Her accusations . . . She is slim

And childish as she bends to hear
 My reading. What if I should pause
 And tell her brutally: "Because
 He told you I was quite austere

Do not forget I am a man—
 Perhaps a stronger man than he?"
 I curse his infidelity
 For making me her custodian

This bitter night. Suppose I ask
 Her not to go? My pulses drum . . .
 Would not her loneliness succumb
 Before my ardor? But I mask

Desire and take her hand to say
"Goodnight." (O, little wounded bird,
Why go?) My lips have framed no word,
But hers—my heart, if she should stay!

—LOUISE CRENSHAW RAY

PARK NEIGHBOR

There is the look of autumn in your eyes.
One slim hand makes small gestures, like a leaf
That hesitates in its bewildered grief
Where two air currents cross. A weak surprise
Troubles your mouth, which resolution tries
To force into the semblance of some brief
Displeasure. Soon, like a too fearful thief,
You will elude imaginary spies.

You are but one of those who typify
This bright and bitter season of decay,
For eyes can tell what lips will never say—
"We love a little while, and then we die;
But now, like huddled leaves that drift together,
We bare our sorrow to this autumn weather."

—JOSEPH UPPER

DEFINITION

Wisdom's a proud name.
But who has seen the thing?
I have had from thrall and king
Many replies—and the same.
Where it is born—how sired—
None knows. Yet some surmise
It is only a word we have for the tired
Look in an old man's eyes.

—TED OLSON

BALM OF LAUGHTER

First there was Mildreth.

She of the fawn slenderness and the eyes poised like winged things.

It was hers to dream happily of deathless fairies pirouetting

In the violet and wine-crimson flush of April mornings

In a far land between dream and unwanted waking.

What now would you tell me, old dream of fawn slenderness?

"Oh, that was a silly dreaming, old-eyed boy. And —so long ago."

And Janina. Her eyes were mightily dark with a dark lustre.

For want of her kiss my slumber was beautifully disturbed,

And made unto a handless groping for butterflys in a hyacinth garden.

Has the slow-stone of time ground newer differences, Old dream of mightily dark eyes?

"Old friend, now we might be—friends still."

And there was Gurtryl.

Mistily she stands within the circle of my last high dreaming,

With all the sky's color winter-filched from her terribly hurt eyes.

There is only the wailing echo of lost birds swooning therein, now.

And smouldering on her bruised lips is all the faded cherry-redness

Of the one very old love. One very old love which was mine.

Gurtryl: you very very beautiful below the thighs.

Is there any little token from you

Who vanished into earth or into air?

"You had every thing of me, and it was not enough."

Oh, why dream in dreamed dreams?
Love is still a grand deception, with myself the de-
ceived and deceiver.
It is oddly worth peculiar sorts of laughter. . .
Bodies somehow grow old down windy paths not of
their own choosing.
Old bodies are cursing or putting away from life
The high dreams of their gone youngness.
Their long gone youngness when love was to be a
wandering
Through hyacinth gardens wherein their Mildreth, or
Janina, or Gurtryl
Waited for them smilingly while the sun went into still
slumber.
But the bodies grew old, old lovers, and they never
found
The hyacinth gardens.
Or the bodies found it only ravished under the white
loins of frost.
And the red sun never slept in his long round walk
Above the windy path not of the body's choosing.
Then is when we learned to laugh with strange
laughter. . .

HAROLD KERR

GILDED TRAP

Up the Gibraltar of his pride
She quivers like a kitchen mouse,
Less loved than ancestors who died
That he might swagger through their house
She breathes by his condoning grace
And shrinks from his obese regime.
Life never meets her face-to-face
Who nibbles at a fringe of dream.

—LUCIA TRENT

SLOW DEATH

Still burns this ancient madness in my brain.

You are the thing desired, the thing denied,

An idol which dead hopes have deified,

A body buried and dug up again.

What thorny harvest from what mouldy grain

Is this dark crop that flowers at eventide?

This youthful wind that once was bidden subside

Now prophesies a full-grown hurricane.

The tortured roots of passion and despair

Should all be withered from these years of drouth.

What weird and reasonless perversity

Evokes again the magnet of your mouth,

The black and perilous magic of your hair,

You that were never mine and will not be!

—JOSEPH UPPER

NEW WISDOM

Briefly one instructs me of life's

Bargaining request:

Settle—and moss accumulates;

Sew now—and later rest.

With due respect for velvet green

I must confess a lust

For less substantial, wispy gowns

Fashioned out of dust.

And leave needles in cushioned pads

While I am young, and play.

I can afford to take nine extra

Stitches when I'm gray.

—G. ERSYL MANAHAN

MY HEART AND FLESH

I

Assuredly but small advantage lies
In ownership of nature so dissective
That it can never hide from its own eyes,
Seeing itself so plainly in perspective!
Being two persons, and the one possessed
Of a barbed irony, a mocking wit
That strikes most cruelly at the simple breast
Of her whose guile, at peak, were counterfeit!

Who feels that edged Discernment as a dart
Envenomed, and that Wit a blade which leaps
So ruthless that a stauncher soul must brave it
Than one who knows too well the hateful art,
And how a smile can flay a lass who keeps
The withered rose, because of one who gave it!

ACCUSATION

II

Now let the high gods tell me what to do
With heart perversely wrought in such a fashion
That it must have a Surety for passion,
A Writ of love—! What am I coming to,
That I can never take a vow on trust,
Believe the dream will justify the waking;
Nor ever chance my heart a gallant breaking,
Or shape a splendid image out of dust!

How shall I cry the god who thus designed me
With a most elemental valor missing?
Who keeps me thrusting desperately behind me
A small but venomous terror, coiled and hissing:
The day that must inevitably find me
Heart shriveled, and with lips not worth the kissing!

—SARA HENDERSON HAY

DEATH COMES TO A POET

No lovely mortal woman was his bride;
Although he sang exultantly of love,
His heart and soul were all unsatisfied;
There was a vision he was dreaming of!
And then *she* came to him. Oh, luminous
She stood upon his threshold, her dark eyes
Importunate with some mysterious
Transcendent passion, her persuasive sighs
Like subtle wafting from enchanted bloom.
Her saffron veils and mantle softly shone
As if an amber dusk suffused his room.
She spoke: "Belovèd, it is I alone
For whom you waited; you shall lie with me
And I shall bear you immortality."

—ADELAIDE LOVE

EPITAPH FOR A WOMAN NOT YET IN EARTH

Seeing the crystal stream of love a flood
To tear the banks, this woman built a weir,
Damming the turgent rush with rocks of shame
And crooked sticks of fear.

She spent herself in weeping and in toil
That muddied all the stream. At last, her race
With water's flowing done, the dammed-up pond
Reflected her pale face.

Then "Come," she whispered, "to my shrine of pain."
And when I climbed, with pity in my throat,
I found her crouched beside a stagnant pool
Where green slime-lilies float.

—MARION R. GOBLE

A FUGUE

Chrysis: Courtezan

Demetrios: Sculptor

- C:** "O take my firm articulate hands in yours.
My fingers shall be quiet tongues that talk
With silent sounds. The touch of flesh endures
When words outworn are sculptures cut from chalk."
- D:** "How shall I make the beauty of her last?
Only in stone and bronze and gold are caught
The replica of dying things. The past
Is clay made pregnant in the music of my thought."
- C:** "O hold your summer lips to mine for June
Disturbs my heart. Enchant me with your praise,
Saying it over and over like a tune
Whose sudden end shall leave a haunting phrase."
- D:** "How shall I mould the languor of a limb,
The eager mouth? Is marble flesh and bone?
Only the miracles of gods can dim
Meridian suns or move a pulse in stone."
- C:** "Lie on my arm and breathe in my strange hair
The lavish odor that shall seep thoughtfully
Into your being. Always you shall care.
And always this sweet madness keep for me.
O kiss the little white birds of my breast
And the small bills uptilted to your eyes.
Enfold them like soft captured birds, at rest,
Between your palms, hushing their quiet cries."
- D:** "What mind shall shape the spirit into brass
Or bronze or gold, or know one shibboleth?
The earth and water fingered in a mass
To make her eyes. O frozen life! and death
There in the quiet fields beneath the grass . . .
Stealthily moving near to take her breath."

—JOHN LEE HIGGINS

SWANS

A shot reverberates,
A blue jay screams,
And the hunter moves
From his hiding.

High in the air,
Wing folded
And one far spread,
A swan tracks
A broken circle,
Topples,
Falls
With a great splash,
And floats
In a tadpole pond.

Following,
Out of the dusk,
Its mate
Lights on the water,
Wings stretched,
Fluttering,
Circles
The drenched feathers,
Plucks the breast

And rises,
Ghostly,
A white streak
Vanishing
With a scream,
And a dirge,

Prelude
To a song,
Grief haunted,

To be heard
In the silence
At the head-waters,
Where the springs rise,

In the epilogue
Of separation
And the ache
Unbearable.

—JOHN LEE HIGGINS

GOLDEN DAYS

I have known golden days,
Bright days of mirth,
In ranging outland ways
Far from the hearth.

I have drained many a cup
Without alloy,
And high have lifted up
The cruse of Joy.

What if the foot no more
Is swift and sure
By reach of river shore
Or open moor.

This I can say at last,
And give God praise,
I have, though they are past,
Known golden days!

—CLINTON SCOLLARD

OCEAN GENTLE AND TERRIBLE

Over the ocean, blue as the flower
Of the hyssop,
Or gray as skies when the snow-bees
Darken the sun with their swarming,
White birds are rovers,
Slaves of the moods of its waters,—
O restless, irresistible ocean,
I am a sea-gull.

On low, tawny dunes the waves lift,
Curve and tumble,
Or break with a gurgling murmur,
A thin, argent ripple;
But always the beaches are sculptured
To the shape of its waters;—
O changeless, enduring ocean,
I am a sand-dune.

By day, by night, staunch boat and sailor
Know the riot
Or calm of the water whose beauty
Forever is changing,
But always the man and the vessel
Are slaves to the sea's vagaries;—
O ocean, gentle and terrible,
I am the ship and the sailor.

—JOHN RICHARD MORELAND

LOVE SONG

Press closer to me lest through sudden strain
This light may flicker and my mind grow dull
And I, forgetting you, find but the hull
Of some dark dream that struggled through my brain.
Press tight against my flesh lest I remain
Forever impotent, my body null—
I cannot stay forever worshipful,
Mute adoration surfeiting with pain.

Let your white fingers close upon my own,
Squeezing the sallow hollow of my palm
Until the very joints beneath it moan
With weight of pressure; then I will be calm.
But touch me! touch me quickly lest it seem
That you who stand before me are but dream!

PEACE

I cried for solitude, you give me this:
A consciousness of sound's abrupt release, —
Then all is still. This silence will increase
Fold after fold to slay me with its kiss
And shroud me in this stark necropolis.
How should I know when I cried out for peace
That my command had bade your laughter cease
And death would be your last parenthesis!

There is no solitude within this calm—
A thousand dull regrets clash in my brain,
A thousand voices call you back again.
There is no peace within my heart, no balm
To soothe the pain that writhes within my breast
And tenders to my body's dark unrest.

—JOHN MEEBANE

AVAILABLE

When I shall die,
My soul will be a poem mailed to God,
The Editor of vast Eternity.
And underneath the newly rounded sod,
Where I shall lie,
No letter of rejection, reaching me,
Will bring the old and bitter pain all poets learn.
God, loving poetry, will not return
A soul.

—WALTER R. ADAMS

TWO WHO LOVED HIM

(Dialogue)

"His voice struck terror, his arms were peace;
He led to error but brought release."

"Oh, he was broken, pitiful, reeling.
With few words spoken, I gave him healing."

"Peculiar, then, we both should claim"

"Two different men who shared a name!
There's always a side that others discover.
Not even a bride can *know* a lover."

—RALPH CHEYNEY

BALLAD

No matter, no matter.
The bells rang acclaim
When he crossed river-water
To give me his name.

No matter, no matter.
They rang high and clear
As I rushed to the bridgeway
To welcome my dear.

No matter, no matter.
They sounded as gay
As I watched the ship founder,
The whirlpool at play.

No matter, no matter.
They'll ring too for me
When I slip to the river
Where no one can see.

—MIRIAM ALLEN DEFORD

CHASM

How often have I held you,
 Oh, my dear,
As I now do,
 And you, who seemed so near,

Have sometime shown your eyes
 All unaware
And by surprise—
 There was a stranger there.

WILFRED J. FUNK

SUNRISE

Daily must darkness die.
Drawing its blade of light,
Dawn stabs quiescent night;
Blood slowly spreads the sky.

Diurnal ritual,
Sun the god-priest
Blesses the bloody feast,
Awful, habitual.

Night with its world of dream,
Life seen through water,
Goes tranced to slaughter,
No bird to scream,

No risen wind to cry.
Victim ordained,
Night, star-wreathed, unprofaned,
Paling goes forth to die.

MIRIAM ALLEN DEFORD

TANKARD'S RIM

There are trees at Tankard's Rim
Older than the house and darker . . .
Cypress growing like a charm
In a pool of stagnant liquor.

There is Spanish moss that drips
Down the portico and strangles
Firmer growth. A creeper flaps
Back and forth beneath the shingles.

Negroes wail at night. Their songs
Float above the moonless river
Higher than a curlew wings,
More remotely than a plover.

Tankard's Rim is deaf to sweet
Chants that flow from negro hovels;
All her jealousies are shut...
Only mice remain and weevils.

—ELEANOR GLENN WALLIS

STILL LIFE

There is one I know
Who always brings to my mind
A blue crock full of clabber. . .

Another reminds me of
The broken bough of a peach tree
Where the fruit has ripened too small
With one side withered and brown. . .

A third is like nothing so much as
The purple-brown pulp in a jelly-bag
When all the juice has drained. . .

But one I know
Is like cranberries—
Cranberries and snow . . .

—ESTHER LOLITA HOLCOMB

PASTURE ON PARNASSUS

By ROBERT LESEUR JONES

Radio to Daedalus, by Virginia Taylor McCormick (Atlantic Coast Printing Co., Norfolk, Va.).

A familiar criticism of Virginia Taylor McCormick's verse consists of the simple statement that it is acceptable; but while such a statement about a poet's work may be essentially good, it is at least connotatively negative and may not please the poet himself. The real truth is, *Radio to Daedalus* is a great deal more than just acceptable. The lyrics of Mrs. McCormick, which have found their inspiration in the phenomena of Virginia hills and Southern Europe, are definitely fine, written as they are out of a genuine appreciation of and a keen insight into the happenings that occur in the course of human events. The poet's excellent technique is an emphatic element in the reader's impression of her work. Mrs. McCormick's power of transforming her subject matter into poetry is not as unique as it is remarkable. Always consistent and always characteristic, her poems have habitually had their inception in the simple things, in flowers and hills, and in old truths that find new interpretations in her mind. Mrs. McCormick is as nearly conservative as she is anything, conservative just as Lizette Woodworth Reese is, but with more sturdy strength than the latter. An interesting insight into Mrs. McCormick's attitude is contained in "The Snob," a genre sonnet:

She knew a lord; "I met him once, my dear,
In London," and her eyes shown at the thought:
"And Baron So-and So, a dashing peer."
A young lieutenant whose grandfather fought
At Flodden field had led her out to dance.
She had a button that adorned a king,
A ribbon from a Chevalier of France,
Gossip to last you through an evening.

Her name sweet fashion's charities has graced,
Yet sick and beggared passed her unaware;
No poor relation ever could have faced
Her jeweled lorgnon with its brittle stare.
Now she is dead she greets Christ with a nod;
He was a carpenter, but she knows God.

The author writes with singular certainty, and only occasionally

is she betrayed into allowing mere good framework to stand for a poem. Perhaps she is not as vital as she could be, but one must remember that there is always room for a particular type of art.

Selected Magazine Verse, 1931, compiled by Editorial Board, Paebur Publishing Company, New York.

Selected Magazine Verse, 1931, dedicated to the Little Poetry Magazine, is an attempt to anthologize the best verse appearing in these small and much harassed periodicals during 1931. Unfortunately, the editors saw fit for some reason to exclude material which was published in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, because, probably, they considered *Poetry* something more than a Little Poetry Magazine. The poems included in the anthology are in general unimpressive, although there are, of course, some pieces of merit and others that are actually outstanding. "After," by Amory Hare; "Winter Solstice," by Verne Bright; "Snow Storm," by Tessa Sweazy Webb; "Carfare," by Arthur H. Nethercot; "Portrait of a Librarian," by Margaret E. Bruner, and "Harvest," by William Brenton, are perhaps the finest of the poems. But much better verse was published in the Little Poetry Magazines during the past year than we find in this collection.

Arrow Unspent, Patrick D. Moreland (Clyde C. Cockrell Co., Dallas).

Arrow Unspent, the winning book of verse in the seventh annual publication contest of the Poetry Society of Texas, has no grave faults, unless we consider the fact that the poems judged collectively are not vivid. The author, a careful craftsman and evidently aware of what poetry is but unable to couch it in poignant diction, fails to make a strong impression. The reader feels that he inevitably falls just short of effectiveness, although the reader is confident that there is genuine promise hidden some place in the background. A book by a young poet, *Arrow Unspent* betrays in Moreland an inability to correctly and surely phrase his poems. His virtues are those that reveal possibilities, and his faults are forgivable in view of the fact that the poet is young.

Garden Book of Verse, edited by William Griffith and Mrs. John Walton Paris (William Morrow & Co., New York).

Even if there were not an ever increasing interest, amounting to an obsession, in gardens scientific, architectural, and otherwise, there would still be a demand sufficient to justify this *Garden Book of Verse*, edited by William Griffith, president of the Poetry Society of America and by Mrs. John Walton Paris, founder of the Federated State Garden Club movement in America. Delving meticulously into all available lore, the editors have collected much familiar and some unfamiliar verse concerning gardens. The reader need not be especially upset by the fact that many of the poems do not deal specifically with gardens.

Those poems about rain, trees, and seasons connote gardens; and the editors excuse for including such verse is plain.

Alms for Oblivion, by Edward Doro (Casa Editorial Franco-Ibero-Americana, Paris).

The reviewer knows nothing whatsoever of Edward Doro; perhaps he has a reputation and perhaps he has not; perhaps he has published another book and perhaps he has not—I do not know. But it is true that he has done some rather excellent work in *Alms for Oblivion*, which found publication in Paris. The author has been influenced a little by the Old School, not in an obnoxious way, but in a manner that adds charm to his work, much of which is decidedly original. His phrasing is rich and fresh, if his forms are sometimes old fashioned; and the imagery of many of the poems is fine. Particularly good are "The Boar and the Shibboleth" and "That Cryptic Time." Doro has been fortunate enough to find complete detachment from the unpleasant archaisms of style of the Old School while he employs its virtues.

Lost Warrior, by Sydney King Russell (The Mosher Press, Portland, Me.).

In a volume that contains some highly commendable clever poems, it seems a pity to discover a great deal of diluted and not very attractive serious verse. Yet this condition is painfully present in *Lost Warrior*. Sydney King Russell, obviously another victim of the sonnet complex, is a poet who would do himself a great justice by sticking to his last, as it were—to light verse of a satirical nature. His clever sonnet portraits, which constitute the initial section of the book, are vividly and exquisitely wrought, if sometimes subtly venomous; but they hardly anticipate the mediocre serious verse which follows. Descriptive to a fault and requiring compactness, the poems of graver mood lack the verve and finish of the author's other work. "A Certain Critic" and "Paterfamilias" are the most intriguing of his many sonnet portraits.

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Announcement

Through the generosity of the family of the late Ernest Hartsock and of Dr. Thornwell Jacobs, president of Oglethorpe University, *Bozart and Contemporary Verse* last month became the property of Oglethorpe. In the future, the magazine will be published under the auspices of the University, continuing with the identical editors and with the same general editorial policy. It is with pride that we begin preparation next month for the bringing out of Volume No. VI, knowing definitely that permanent publication is assured.

Contributors to this Issue

Louise Crenshaw Ray, whose book *Color of Steel* has just come off the press, is a Birmingham, Ala., poet. Joseph Upper, a frequent contributor to our pages, lives in Washington, D. C. G. Ersyl Manahan resides at Wellington, Kans. Ralph Cheyney, of Philadelphia, is a poet of considerable prominence. John Richard Moreland is a widely published poet of Norfolk, Va. Wilfred J. Funk, author of *Manhattans, Bronzes, and Queens*, is owner of the *Literary Digest*. John Lee Higgins appears frequently in the poetry magazines, and makes his home in Washington, D. C. Lucia Trent is the wife of Ralph Cheyney. Clinton Scollard, a very prolific poet and husband of Jessie Rittenhouse, lives in Florida at present. John Mebane is a resident of High Point, N. C. Harold Kerr, another frequent contributor, lives in Chicago. Ted Olson, of Laramie, Wyo., has not appeared in *Bozart* since last year. Adelaide Love's poems are often published in the *New York Times*. Sara Henderson Hay, of Anniston, Ala., is a very promising young poet. Marion R. Goble lives in Pasadena, Cal.

Ernest Hartsock Memorial Award

"In memory of Ernest Hartsock, donated by Cora Smith Gould—a \$25 prize for the best poem in each issue of *Bozart and Contemporary Verse*." The Ernest Hartsock Memorial Award is hereby given to L. Logan Kean for her poem "Bon Voyage," which appeared in the March-April number of *Bozart and Contemporary Verse*.

